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SERMON DCXXII.

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THE LOSS OF THE SOUL.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—MARK viii. 36, 37.

This is one of the most grave and momentous inquiries which can be proposed to the human mind. It is intended by our Lord to induce reflection—to awaken and warn the sinner, and influence him to "deny himself and take up his cross and follow" Christ. It implies that the soul may be lost, and that those who strive to gain the world, and are unwilling to give it up for the sake of religion, will lose their souls.

The subject of this discourse is, *The Loss of the Soul.*

What is meant by the loss of the soul? In answering this question, it is evident that we must rely chiefly on the teachings of revelation. The scene in which the reality is to transpire, is veiled from our sight. The facts about which we inquire, lie beyond the province of the senses. On this subject, conjecture is rash and arrogant. And reason is incompetent to pass judgment upon the divine administration, and to determine, independently of revelation, the proper penalty of sin. Human reason is liable to fall into great mistakes on this subject, on account of our self-interest, evil inclinations, and ignorance. We must not lose sight of the fact, that the subject has a relation to our own inter-

ests, and to the interests of our friends and fellow men ; it awakens our self-love and partiality, and our tender and sympathetic affections ; and whoever takes upon him to decide upon the guilt of sin, must be supposed to be conscious that the decision has a personal bearing upon himself, and consequently to be exposed to an improper bias and erroneous judgments. To this must be added the blinding influence of depraved inclinations, darkening the understanding and blunting the moral sensibilities. Man is a sinner. The *good* man, even though he has been convinced of sin, and has seen its criminality in himself, yet is not wholly free from the effect of sin, in obscuring his spiritual discernment, and disqualifying him to be an unprejudiced and righteous judge in his own case.

Besides, human reason lacks information. It can be qualified to judge truly and safely on this complicated and momentous subject, only by obtaining a perfect knowledge of the intrinsic malignity of sin in itself, and in all its relations. One needs to comprehend its relation to God, and how evil and bitter a thing it is to feel and act out disobedience to the great, and good, and infinite Jehovah. He needs to know the relation of sin to the soul, in which it works corruption and whose immortal interests it tends to destroy. He needs to understand the whole amount of good, which sin aims and tends to destroy in this world, and throughout the universe of intelligent creatures, propagating forever its own pollution among them, and spreading rebellion and ruin far and wide. No man has these qualifications. "Such knowledge is too wonderful" for us ; it is too high and vast for us to attain. No one is, therefore, competent to judge of the ill-desert of sin, and the penalty which the wicked will suffer. No one can determine by reason independently of revelation, how *infinite* benevolence, guided by infinite wisdom and justice, will treat sin, nor what influence that treatment will have upon law, and justice, and government, and the welfare of all the worlds of God's intelligent universe. "Who knoweth the power of His anger?" Will you trust a little child to decide what is a proper punishment for a forger, who fraudulently writes a note? The child would be out of his place in judging of such a case, by reason of his limited knowledge of the bearings of the crime upon the interests of society. The wisest of men are not less incompetent to judge of the proper punishment of sin, not only through their ignorance, but through self-interest and prejudice.

It is the rightful prerogative of God to pass sentence upon the transgressors of his law. The only wise and safe course for us, is to learn from the word of God what that sentence will be. At length we shall learn it from the decisions of the last day. It is evident to every serious reader of the Bible, that the language of Scripture is very explicit and strong on this subject. It speaks of "losing the soul," of "the perdition of ungodly men," of

"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." It declares "that the wages of sin is death." What are we to understand by this language?

I. It does not mean *annihilation*. Those who tell us that the loss of the soul consists in its ceasing to be, take upon them to make an assertion without reason and against Scripture. The visible appearances which follow in the train of death, might favor the presumption that death is the end of man. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." To the eye of sense his path terminates at the grave, and his plans come to an end. Some have supposed death as threatened to our first parents to be annihilation, and that man by sinning forfeited his existence, beyond this world. This supposition is founded on a superficial observation, and a false interpretation of Scripture.

It requires but little reflection to convince any one that death is not the destruction of anything—it is a dissolution of parts. But not a particle of the dying body ceases to be. The noble ship, which once rode proudly on the ocean, the glory of her builders, the hope of her owners, freighted with a precious cargo, may be wrecked and scattered in broken pieces over the waters, and parts of it sunk in the depths of the sea. We say that it is lost. But it is not annihilated; not a particle of it has passed out of existence. So death is the separation of the body and soul. The body goes to decay; it may be reduced to ashes; it may mingle with the earth; it may be dissipated in the air, but not a particle of it is annihilated. It rests, awaiting "the voice of the Son of man," at "the resurrection both of the just and of the unjust." The soul leaves the body at death. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The soul like its eternal Author, is indestructible. No sword can touch it; no weapon of death can reach it. Our Saviour exhorts us to "fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but rather fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell." After the body has been killed, there yet remains a living soul—a simple, spiritual, immaterial being. It is capable of existing in a perfectly disembodied state, as Abraham, Moses and Paul now exist, "absent from the body," and as "the spirits in prison" now exist. It is this which, after he hath killed the body, God hath power to cast into hell.

It is equally evident that the sentence to the *second death*, which is to be pronounced upon the wicked at the resurrection, does not imply a return to non-existence. Nothing short of Omnipotence has power to extinguish the conscious existence of a living soul; and God has never signified to us that he intends to exercise his power in such a way. He has foretold the *destruction* of the

wicked, he has declared that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." But he has not intimated, that the end of a life of sin is the extinction of consciousness in a sleep that shall "know no waking." There is a force in the terms, "destruction," "death," and kindred expressions of Scripture, which is not exhausted by the idea of the cessation of existence. This was not the purport of the threatening to Adam. It was not comprehended in the execution of the threatening. The declaration to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," was to take effect at once. It was fulfilled in its true intent: its import in this respect was plain, and cannot be mistaken. He did die *that day*; any other doctrine impeaches the truth of the Bible. But his death was not a "return to blank nothingness." In the very day of his transgression, Adam died. *Man* died in the import of the threatening, and that death in effect, includes the sentence, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,"—and all the other specific evils, which God in his infinite justice shall ever see proper to inflict upon the transgressor. The threatening did not preclude a remedy. It was such a death as created an exigency for redemption. "For we thus judge," says the apostle Paul, "that if Christ died for all, then were *all dead*; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." It is such a death, as they who neglect the great salvation will be dying forever, under a forfeiture of all claim to the favor of God, and subjection to his displeasure.

The loss of the soul, therefore, is not the extinction of its conscious existence. It lends no countenance to that "Christianized Materialism," which teaches with reverential speech, the seductive error that the soul sleeps with the body at death in an unconscious state, and that the wicked at the resurrection will be annihilated; thus denying the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. No, the soul is immortal. Its state and mode of existence may be changed from time to time, but it will continue to exist evermore; it cannot by extinction, perish; the material tenement is its tabernacle. When it is taken down, the soul enters a new abode.

II. The loss of the soul does not imply any suspension or diminution of its *powers* and *capabilities*. We behold among mankind the same tokens of a moral nature, but very different grades on the scale of endowment. The soul that is lost, continues to possess forever all its faculties and susceptibilities, and carries with it all its knowledge and culture. In the future world, it is the same intelligent moral agent that it was here in the body. Wrecked as it may be as to its prospects on the shores of eternity, it will not lose its identity nor its properties. It is, consciously, the same soul that refused here when God called, which in eternity will call, and God will not hear—the same that here repulsed

the Saviour's grace, will there be repulsed by "the wrath of the Lamb." The soul will forever think, and feel and desire; it will be forever capable of hope, though hope may never come into its prison of despair; it will forever be susceptible of joy, though sorrow may be its bed. The memory, which Bunyan has called "the register of the soul," will recal the sins which the man has heretofore committed, and recal also the word that forbade it—*Son, remember*, will be the employment of the lost soul. There will be no forgetfulness; yet nothing will be thought of, but to the greater wounding of the spirit. The memory will let these thoughts down upon the conscience, and make it cry reproachfully, "You knew your Master's will, but you did it not." Conscience will not sleep, nor be dull, nor be misled, in hell. The understanding will be employed in apprehending the depths of sin which the man has loved, the good nature of God, whom he has hated, and the blessings of eternity which he has despised. Every touch of the understanding upon the memory will be like the touch of "sharp arrows of the mighty, with burning coals of juniper." Imagination also will be active, with no less terror and perplexity, as a man, by fear bereft of his senses, starts and stares with fearful thoughts. There will be deep thoughts of the nature and occasions of sin, of God, of separation from him, and of the coming eternity;—thoughts which will clash with glory inaccessible, clash with justice, clash with law, clash with self, clash with hell—passions that will be galling and stinging and dropping their poison into the sore, wounded, fretted spirit.

The loss of the soul implies, therefore, no suspension nor diminution of its susceptibilities and faculties. If the memory, and conscience, and understanding of the soul were stupefied at death, or contracted and restricted, so that they could no longer recur to the deeds done in the body, the dreadfulness of the loss would seem to the unsanctified heart to be quite tolerable. But its essential powers admit of no such abridgement or slumber. The final loss of which we speak, will waken and enlarge and quicken all its powers. And it will be forever itself the exactest possible "daguerreotype picture of all its transient states and passing acts."

III. Let us attend to the positive representation of the subject. The loss of the soul is its *loss of holiness*, and the consequent loss of its usefulness and happiness forever under the deserved wrath of God. It is the endurance of the just punishment of its sins. We are assured by the Scriptures that the favor of God is life, and that the indispensable qualification for enjoying his favor is holiness. Being "dead in sin," the impenitent soul is already lost. It is kept for a season under a system of reclaiming measures and means of salvation. The Redeemer "came to seek and to save that which was lost." Under this

remedial system, the sinner enjoys a respite—the invitations of heavenly mercy beseech him to be reconciled to God; these sacred sabbaths, the sanctuary, the Bible, Christian friends, are cords of sweet influence, drawing him to the Saviour; the goodness of God on every side delights his senses; the twinging stripes of divine wrath, are for a time stayed. But soon the soul passes away from the world in its sins, and it is then completely and forever lost—lost in guilt and pollution, and abandoned to the elements of remorse and sorrow, which are within and around it.

To its proper end and happiness in glorifying God, and in benefiting and blessing men, it is lost; *lost, forever lost*. The darkness through which it wanders, the chains which hold it, the agonies and degradations that accumulate upon it, are such as strike the mind with fearful horror, and smite down hope with a fatal blow.

Lost is its opportunity of salvation. No inviting voice of an atoning Saviour is heard in hell; no gentle strivings of the Spirit are felt;—no offer of pardoning mercy is ever made there.

Lost are its earthly comforts and means of gratification, which here mitigated the curse, and cheered the heart with joyous sensations and pleasant hopes.

Lost are its restraints which surrounded it in this world, and which operated as sweet and salutary forces, to hold its depravity in check, and kept it often from dashing downward in corruption and iniquity with reckless and impious haste. Now, set free from restraining influences, it rages wildly and blasphemes God, a terror to itself, and “a dread to even unsightly monsters of the pit.”

The sacred writers generally set forth the loss of the soul in figurative language. The most fearful imagery is employed on this subject which the human mind can conceive. “There is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.” There is “the smoke of the torment that ascendeth up forever and ever.” There is “the everlasting fire,” that never shall be quenched. There is “the worm” that gnaws and “never dies.” There is the pit over which hangs “the blackness of darkness.” There is “the resurrection of damnation,” and the lifting up the eyes in torment, and the being cast away by Jehovah in his righteous indignation. Such language is used in the Bible, because it is best adapted to express and to awaken just conceptions of the evil to be endured.

Some may attempt to relieve themselves of the painful apprehension of the soul's loss, by the idea that the terrific language of Scripture which describes it, is not to be understood literally. But a simple confidence in the veracity of the Word of God will assure us that the metaphors do not exaggerate the reality, nor mislead the child-like belief on this subject. No words used in their literal sense could adequately express the vivid conceptions

of the writers, or do justice to the awful subject. In the metaphorical language, derived from the most terrific objects in nature, there is a depth of meaning which we cannot fathom, but which is the more dreadful because it is inexpressible. None can know all that is implied in the loss of the soul, unless he shall be so unhappy as to learn it by experience.

We have no reason to doubt that there is a literal significance in the indignation and wrath of God, and in the positive punishments which God by his just judgment will render to his impenitent enemies. "He shall gather the good into his presence, and cast the bad away," and deliver them up to the torments of the devil and their own guilty consciences and deep thoughts, as on a burning rack—the due reward of their sins. In its nature, the loss of the soul is a peculiar loss. He that loses his soul, loses himself. "For what is a man advantaged," says Christ, "if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away." If by getting the world, he lose himself, the loss is without a parallel. It is a loss which he will not be able to consider quietly, and sit down patiently under the sense of it. There can be no such grace in hell as patient enduring. There will be no foundation for patience. The providence of God is the foundation of patience to the afflicted. "But men go not to hell by providence but by sin." And sin being the cause of his loss, he will justify God, and tear himself with self-tormenting thoughts, laying the fault upon himself. For we know that "there is nothing which will sooner work vexation of spirit in a man than a full conviction in his conscience that by his own folly and wrong action, persisted in against caution, and counsel, and reason, to the contrary, he has brought himself into extreme distress and misery." How much more will it make this fire burn when he shall see what kind report God gave him of sin, of his grace, and of hell, and yet, for a toy, for a bauble, he was so foolish and perverse as to neglect the door of hope, and voluntarily bring this loss upon himself. Verily we may ask, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" There is a force in the expressions of Scripture on this subject which may well make us tremble, and inspire us with an active and abiding dread of the threatened evil. Had there been less of indefiniteness and awful mysteriousness in the inspired representations of this dreadful loss, the minute description might have given us a clearer conception of the nature and mode of the penal retribution, and made us more familiar with it, but it would not have been more effectual to persuade men to turn from the ways of sin, and make them obedient and holy. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Some may doubt the justice of this terrible penalty. But we should remember that God is Judge. He will not be influ-

enced by our doubts, but will do what he knows to be just, and what is just, rendering to every sinner "according to the deeds done in the body."

We should guard against the influence of *mere feeling*, in judging of God's holy government, and in contemplating the penalty of sin. Our feelings may be benevolent and sympathetic, but they are limited and, in many cases, incompatible with the permanent welfare of the kingdom of God. It is the part of pious submission, distrustful of self, to yield to the high behest, "Be still and know that I am God."

Some may charge this doctrine with embittering all happiness, and may wonder how those who believe it can be happy in this world or the next. But it should be remembered, that there is a bright side to the divine economy, and the brightness is so great and glorious, that to the devoted Christian, intent on admiring its glory, the darkness is hardly perceptible. Perdition is a dark spot in the moral universe. But we are to behold also Christ's mission and death to *save* sinners. We are to rejoice and glory in a crucified Redeemer, and the hope of salvation through him. The saints in glory will behold God on the throne without "clouds and darkness round about him;" they will understand his love and justice, and the reasons of his administration. His mysterious acts, whether in this life, or in the future, will appear to them, in the light of eternity, to be all wise, and right, and good. And they will join with angel-worshippers in everlasting "Alleluias," with no murmurings at his past decisions, to mar their felicity.

The loss of the soul, duly realized, would restrain the spirit of worldliness, and lead us to use this world as not abusing it. The pursuits of pleasure and schemes for accumulating wealth, "choke the word," and drown the souls of multitudes in destruction and perdition. Here is the great danger which threatens the immortal interests of men at the present day. The extraordinary prosperity of the country, in its increase of business and wealth, has stimulated the masses, and enlisted the energies of men in money-making. Rushing eagerly forward, they are in great danger of forgetting God and their souls. Is it not so? Turn your thoughts to the scenes of coming destiny. Could you reject the Saviour if you realized what is comprehended in the loss of the soul? Suppose you have goods laid up for many years, "What shall it profit?"

The piety of Christians, in many cases, withers under an absorbing worldliness, and degenerates to a dull and lifeless formality. How shall this declension be avoided, and the heart be secured and elevated above the stupefying, bewildering influence of the world? We must pause and consider how these things will appear on our passage to eternity, and amidst the decisions of the righteous tribunal. What if hope should then depart, and

dread despair lift its unavailing cry; "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

The loss of the soul, duly realized, would make us anxious to save others, as well as ourselves. We are journeying with fellow travellers to eternity. We should speak to them of the way and the end, and strive, by our prayers, our counsels, and our kind efforts, to turn their feet from the broad road to destruction, into the path of life and heaven.

The loss of the soul! Let me say that the reality far surpasses the representation that has now been presented. The time is not distant when every impenitent sinner will be amazed at his present indifference to the great concerns of his soul. The present world will then have passed away. Time will have numbered its years. The vast world to which you go, will have opened—eternity, heaven, and hell. The sinner's doom will be fixed. What a prospect is this! Prepare to meet the awful scenes of eternity in peace.

What can I do, in bringing this discourse to a conclusion, but to hold out the signal of hope: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Ah, sinner, your soul is in danger of being lost forever, and immense difficulties lie in the way of its being saved.

Your soul has been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God; it was worth the infinite ransom; and it is worth being saved by a life of faith, and self-denial, and prayer. Your soul has been cared for in heaven. Will you not care for it yourself? Christ offers to save you. Will you not come to him that you may have life?

You see the prospect before you, of eternal communion with the wailings of the lost. You may shrink from the effort necessary to escape the coming doom. There is the plea of business, the plea of pleasure, and the plea of carnal apathy, coming up in favor of some more convenient season. But consider, and be wise: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

SERMON DCXXIII.

BY REV. WILLIAM WHITTAKER,

PLAINFIELD, N. J.

IMMORTALITY.

"If a man die, shall he live again?"—JOB xiv. 14.

THE belief of a future state of happiness or misery seems to have been coeval with the existence of man. The Almighty revealed the doctrine of the soul's immortality to the original progenitors of the human race, and by them it has been transmitted to their posterity. It is beyond all controversy that the whole nation of the Jews, with the exception of the Sadducees, did believe in a state of rewards and punishments after death, even *before* "life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel." The truth of this remark will appear perfectly obvious to the unprejudiced mind, by a reference to the answer which Abraham returned to the question of Dives, when he requested him to send Lazarus to warn his five brethren, lest they also should come into the same place of torment. Abraham said unto him, "they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. If they hear *not* Moses and the prophets; neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Now this passage proves conclusively that the Old Testament scriptures do contain evidence sufficient to convince the most skeptical, that there is beyond the grave, a heaven for the righteous, and a hell for the wicked.

This doctrine will receive further confirmation from the Mosaic account of the creation, recorded in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis: "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." In this declaration, there is an evident distinction between the material and the immaterial part of man—the body and the soul; in accordance with the language of Solomon, recorded in the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes, and the seventh verse: "Then shall the *dust* return to the earth as it was, and the *spirit* shall return unto *God* who gave it."

Another argument in favor of the immortality of the soul, and a future state, is derived from the language of David when speaking of the death of his child. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Now the consciousness that David should follow his child to the dark and silent tomb, and that the stern tyrant would hold them both in his iron grasp forever, could not infuse one drop of consolation into his bruised and

broken spirit. It was the firm conviction that he should meet it again, in a brighter and a better world, beyond the ravages of death, that enabled him to submit with becoming fortitude and resignation to the mysterious and painful dispensation of divine Providence.

Job, under all the afflictions and persecutions which he was called to endure in this present life, was supported by the assurance that his "Redeemer liveth,—that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth—whom he shall see for himself, and his eyes should behold and not another."

From the several instances which we have thus noticed, it must be obvious to the reflecting mind, that the doctrine of a future state was believed by the great body of the Jewish nation before the introduction of the Gospel dispensation.

If we pass from the Scriptures of the Old Testament to the philosophical writings of ancient Greece and Rome, we shall find many beautiful and sublime passages relating to a life beyond the grave. Their sages and philosophers felt the seeds of mortality within them; they saw daily instances of it round about them, but how far the power of death reached, they knew not. They beheld the body deposited in the grave; but whether man had an immortal part which would survive the ravages of death and live forever, was a problem which they could not solve. Such thoughts as these, we may suppose, would naturally arise in the mind of a reflecting heathen, and we therefore conclude that they must have had some indistinct conceptions of a future state of existence. They talked much of their *Elysian fields*, where the souls of the good would enjoy pleasure and delight, and of *Tartarus*, where the wicked would be punished forever.

Socrates, in the full prospect of his own dissolution, makes use of the following language: "Death would be very hard to me, if I were not persuaded that when I depart hence, I shall go to the wise God, and to those who are already departed this life, without doubt, abundantly better, and much happier than those who are left behind." After his condemnation, he is represented as saying to his judges: "I have a good hope that it will happen well to me, that I am thus sent to death. What delight to live and converse with the immortal heroes and poets of antiquity. It becomes you also, my friends, to be of good comfort with regard to death, since no evil, in life or death, can befall virtuous men, whose true interest is ever the concern of Heaven."

Likewise, the great Cyrus, in a similar manner, is said to have thus expressed his hopes on his death bed to his own children: "Think not that when I shall leave you, I shall be nowhere or nothing, for even whilst I continued with you, ye could not see my soul, but ye only knew it to be in this body by my actions. And so, in like manner *after death*, ye may believe that my soul lives, though ye see it not, for never could I be persuaded to

think that a soul which lives in a mortal body should die when it leaves it, or that the soul should be without sense when it escapes from its senseless companion, the body; *but quite the contrary*, that then it begins properly to *live*, and to be most wise and happy when it is broken loose from the chains of an encumbering flesh."

Such was the language of the most enlightened heathen, in relation to that most important inquiry: "If a man die, shall he live again?" before the clearer light of the gospel shed its illuminating beams upon the world. But as mankind approached nearer to the Christian dispensation, their views assumed a more definite and tangible form, just as the "rising sun shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." Some founded their notions of a future state, on the immortal and spiritual nature of the soul—some from the strong desire of immortality implanted in the human breast, and others from the unequal distribution of good and evil in the present life, or the seeming inequalities in the dispensations of divine Providence. It is true, that after all, they were involved in great darkness on the subject; all their investigations ended only in doubt and uncertainty, yet the bare possibility of living again after death, afforded them a degree of consolation, and they were willing to hope that it might prove true.

Suffice it to say, that the belief of a future state is common to all ages and nations of the world, where all mankind will be happy or miserable, according to their conduct in the present life. It is a fact standing prominently forth on the broad basis of man's history, from the beginning of the world up to the present hour. Proof of this fact is to be found in the most refined American, who basks in the full splendor of gospel light and liberty, and in the wildest savage who roams the desert, and scours the forest for his prey—in the most enlightened Christian, who "looks through nature, up to Nature's God," and the dark idolator who deifies a river—falls prostrate before the noon-day sun, or calls upon the stars to behold him, while he worships the silent moon in the still hour of night.

Such is the nature of man, that he cannot live contentedly upon the things of time and sense; it is not in the power of any finite object to satisfy the cravings of his rational and immortal mind. Though the world of nature is redolent of life and beauty, and teeming with wonders to call forth our gratitude and praise, yet in vain do we look for an object commensurate with our wishes, or on which the restless spirit may expend its deathless energies. Amidst all the vexations and disappointments of this life, man looks for consolation to the *unseen and eternal*; he penetrates the veil which hides futurity from mortal sight, and finds rest only in the paradise of God. "That is the mark we tend to, for the soul can take no lower flight, and seek no meaner goal."

How deplorable—how hopelessly wretched would the condition of man be in this vale of tears, if bereft of the cheering anticipations which the gospel of Jesus can inspire. He feels that, day by day, he is verging to the grave—that soon the frail tenement of humanity will crumble into its original elements—that the glorious sun will shine on him no more, and that he must lie down in the place of darkness and silence. All the delights that charm and gladden him here, will soon fade and pass away before his darkened vision, and he must bid a final farewell to the dear companions of his earthly pilgrimage. While indulging in this train of melancholy reflections, he may be disposed to adopt the language of Henry Kirk White, so accordant with his own feelings. “Fifty years, and who will think of Henry? I shall sink as sinks the traveller in the crowded streets of busy London. Some short bustles caused, a few inquiries, and the crowd close in, and all’s forgotten.”

Now, under such a terrible revolution of nature—such a sun-dering of near and dear connections—such an oblivion of all that is bright and beautiful in the world within and the world without, what but the sure and certain hope of surviving the wreck and ruin of all terrestrial things, and entering upon a state of perfect and uninterrupted beatitude, where death and the curse are known no more, can calm the troubled spirit, and give the weary rest.

The gospel not only teaches us that we shall live again after death, but permits us to indulge the pleasing hope of reunion with the loved and lost of earth. Who can go down to the silent chambers of the grave, without distraction at the thought of being separated forever from the companions of our earthly pilgrimage?

“They have not perished—no,
Kind words, remembered voices, once so sweet,
Smiles radiant long ago,
And features, the great soul’s apparent seat,—
All shall come back—each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again.”

SERMON DCXXIV.

BY REV. WILLIAM WHITTAKER,

PLAINFIELD, N. J.

RECOGNITION.

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"—1 THESS. ii. 19.

"I must confess," says the sainted Baxter, "as the experience of my own soul, that the expectation of loving my friends in heaven, principally kindles my love to them while on earth. If I thought I should never know them, and consequently never love them after this life is ended, I should number them with temporal things, and love them as such; but I now delightfully converse with my pious friends in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them forever, and I take comfort in those that are dead, or absent, believing that I shall shortly meet them in heaven, and love them with a heavenly love." Such have been the sentiments and feelings of the vast majority of Christians in every portion and period of the world, and they are in perfect harmony with the teachings of revelation, and the deductions of sound philosophy.

And why should we not indulge "the pleasing hope, the fond desire" of renewing in another and a better world, the fellowship of kindred hearts which has been so suddenly interrupted by the stern mandate of death. Why should we not meet and commune with those pure and holy beings, with whom we have taken sweet counsel, as we have walked together through the checkered lanes of life's weary pilgrimage to the city of habitation? Friendship, pure, warm, disinterested, and founded on religious principles, is not a flower of earth, frail as it is beautiful, which rises up before us like an oasis in the desert, to refresh and gladden our fainting spirits, and then leaves us to mourn over its faded loveliness in all the bitterness of disappointed hope. No, it is a plant of heavenly origin, and, though frequently made to bend before the blasts and storms of this uncongenial clime, yet when transplanted into the paradise above, where there "is purer air, a softer sky, and a never-setting sun," it will put forth more vigorous and healthy shoots, and flourish in immortal youth and beauty. Shall this reasonable expectation, then, of meeting once more with the loved and lost of earth, prove a delusion—the creature of an unbridled fancy, and an over heated imagination? Shall the longing desire of the disconsolate widow, and the helpless orphan, to look once more upon

the husband and the father, never be gratified? Why, then, is it implanted in the breast of the bereaved and suffering children of humanity? We ask, would a being of infinite wisdom and love present this heavenly cordial to the fainting spirits and quivering lips of his dear children in this vale of tears; just let them taste its blessedness, and then, with cruel hand, dash it to the ground? This can never be the conduct of him whose nature and whose name is love—his goodness, his wisdom, his justice and his truth, all stand pledged to grant the reasonable desires of his own children.

How far our future blessedness will depend on the knowledge and society of our Christian friends, it is impossible for us to determine; but we may reasonably suppose that it will be greatly augmented by the holy fellowship and converse of those kindred spirits, in whose presence we delighted to dwell, and by whose side we loved to linger in this vale of tears. There are several portions of the word of God which seem to throw light on this subject, and which may aid us in our investigations. The Church triumphant is frequently described under the beautiful simile of a *family*, and it is one which awakens in the breast the tenderest feelings, and calls forth the loveliest and sweetest reminiscences. In a Christian family there is uninterrupted intercourse—mutual affection, a congeniality of taste and sentiment, and personal knowledge. Without acquaintance, there can be no friendship; and as this principle will be carried to the highest possible state of perfection in the world to come, it would seem absolutely necessary that we should have a clear perception, and a perfect knowledge of the persons of those with whom it shall be our happiness to associate forever. Is not this what Paul meant when he addressed our text to his Thessalonian converts: "For what is hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

That Christian relatives and friends shall distinctly remember in the eternal world those whom they have left behind, may be fairly inferred from the language that passed between Abraham and Dives. It is plainly evident from this parable, that the departed do not forget the living, nor yet the past events of their own personal history. "But Abraham said, Son, *remember* that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

That saints shall derive pleasure from meeting together in heaven, may be determined by a reference to several passages of Scripture. The meeting of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all

the prophets in the kingdom of God, and Lazarus reposing in the bosom of the "father of the faithful," affords not only the pleasing hope that we shall know each other hereafter, but that this knowledge will tend to augment our felicity. Of the patriarchs, it is said "they were gathered unto their people." Now, by this expression, it could not be meant the gathering of their *bodies* to those of their kindred, for in this sense, neither Abraham nor Isaac were gathered unto their people. The former was buried in the cave of Machpelah in Canaan, while his kindred were interred either in Ur of the Chaldees, or in Haran, and the latter was buried with none of his friends, except his parents. The meaning, therefore, is, that their immortal spirits were gathered to the "general assembly and Church of the first born," to the congregation of the blessed in the celestial paradise.

That we shall recognise our Christian friends in heaven, receives additional confirmation from the language of our Saviour to the penitent malefactor. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" and if so, we may reasonably conclude that they would know each other, and that this knowledge would afford unspeakable happiness to the ransomed spirit of the dying thief.

The idea of meeting again our departed Christian friends after death, seems to be instinctive in the human soul, and inseparable from its very constitution. The desire is so strong—so natural, so innocent, so intimately connected with our highest and holiest feelings, and binds us so closely with invisible and eternal realities, that it cannot be sinful to entertain and cherish it. Under the influence of this delightful anticipation, how many of the loved and lost seem to revive in our recollection; we see them again, not agonized with pain, and wasting away under the consuming power of disease—not cold and motionless, and clad in the vestments of the grave, but clothed with spiritual, incorruptible and glorious bodies, "like unto the angels of God," having thrown off the dishonors of the tomb, and "emerged into life, day light and liberty." How many voices long since hushed in death, now speak to us in tones of celestial sweetness, bidding us "not to sorrow as those without hope for them who have fallen asleep in Jesus." How precious to the worn and wearied spirit of the Christian pilgrim is this hope of reunion in the land of the blest. It rolls away the dark clouds of sorrow which gather around the soul, and fills it with joy and peace through believing. It enables the afflicted believer to look beyond the Jordan of death to those bright mansions in the skies, where dwell the "pure in heart," and to say with the Christian poet—

"I feel that, however long to me
The slumber of the grave may be,
I shall know them again 'mid the countless throng,
Who shall bear their part in the Seraphim's song."

The Roman orator, Cicero, gives utterance to sentiments, on

this pleasing subject, which will be cordially adopted by every child of God. "For my part, I feel myself transported with the desire of seeing my departed friends, whose characters I respected, and whose persons I loved. Bent on my journey to them, I would not be recalled by the promise of restored youth. Oh! glorious day, when I shall leave the tumult and corruption of the world, and join the society and council of divine minds! Of all that have left the world before me, I weep for Cato the most. His *soul*, however, did not desert me, but still looked back upon me in its flight to those happy mansions, to which he was assured I should one day follow him. And if I seemed to bear his death with fortitude, it was because I supported myself under the consoling reflection, that we could not long be separated." Is not this what the apostle meant, when, addressing in the text the Thessalonian converts, he said: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" Did he not endeavor to afford consolation to the sorrowing and bereaved, by the assurance that, "those who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him, and so shall they be ever with the Lord. We shall *live together* with him." And why should we not indulge this pleasing hope—this fond desire?

Though it may not be plainly and expressly made known in the word of God, yet it is deducible from the very nature of future blessedness, which is a state of infinite perfection and bliss. If *memory* shall not be defective; if *knowledge* shall be progressive in heaven, then the dearest ties which we formed on earth, will not, *cannot*, be buried in everlasting forgetfulness. A lovely and precious child once lost her mother at an age too early to fix the loved features in her remembrance. She was as frail as beautiful, and soon faded away. She would lie upon the lap of the friend who took a mother's care of her, and winding one wasted arm about her neck, would say: "Now tell me about my dear mamma." And when the oft-told tale had been repeated, she would softly say, "Take me into the parlor; I want to see my mother," and would lie for hours contentedly gazing on her portrait. At last, the trying hour came; the dew of death was already on the flower, as its life sun was going down. All at once a brightness, as if from the upper world, burst over the child's colorless countenance—the eyelids flashed open, the lips parted, and she looked piercingly into the far above. "Mother!" she cried, with transport in her tone, and passed with a sweet smile into her mother's bosom.

Perhaps there is nothing on earth that affords greater joy than the reunion of dearly beloved friends, after a long and painful separation. I will not attempt to describe the feelings of the fond mother, who has been compelled to mourn over the absence of her only son, while far away upon the tempestuous

ocean. Wearisome days and nights were indeed appointed to her; every gust of wind, and every flash of lightning that penetrated her lonely dwelling convulsed her very soul, as she pictured to her excited imagination the yawning gulf, and the unfathomable abyss of the ocean into which she feared the object of her anxious solicitude had sunk to rise no more. And when, after months and years of bitterness, spent over that child of many prayers and tears, the kindly winds of heaven wafted to her the delightful intelligence that her sailor boy was yet alive—what mind can conceive—what tongue can tell the rapture of that moment, when she greeted his well-known voice, and clasped in her fond embrace the dearest idol of her affections?

How unspeakably great then—how inconceivably rapturous will be the joy experienced by the redeemed and glorified, when they shall be permitted to meet and welcome to their own bright and blissful abode those whom they have loved, and left for a while in this vale of tears. How soothing to the chafed and sorrowing spirit of the mourner, is the thought that soon the wound which death has made will be healed—that the tears which death has caused us to shed will be dried up, and that “the beautiful beings which now flit before us like visions, will stay in our presence forever.” What an exhilarating and delightful prospect is thus presented to cheer the worn and wearied spirit of the sorrowing Christian—to banish from his heart every feeling of sadness, and to make him triumph even amid the ravages of death.

In conclusion, let this subject administer consolation to those who are called to mourn the loss of valued and pious friends. In the order of Providence, you have been compelled to drink the bitter cup of affliction—you have stood beside the dying bed of an affectionate, faithful and truly godly parent—you have watched the sun of her earthly being shedding his last lingering ray upon her once bright, but now faded countenance—you have marked with intense solicitude the fluttering pulse, the sunken eye, and the hollow cheek. At last weary nature, worn out with pain and suffering, yielded beneath the pressure of its load, and the convulsive struggle and dying groan proclaimed in language too plain to be misunderstood, that the dark night of death had thrown its sable covering over the inanimate form before you. And now, with a slow and solemn step, you follow to the tomb to see, with tearful eyes and aching hearts, the coffin lowered into its final resting place, and cheerless oblivion close her dark portals over that once loved form—now cold and dead. But is there no ray of light to shine upon the incumbent darkness—must moonless and everlasting night triumph over all that you once loved and valued? No, sweeter than odors wafted from the mountains of spices, and more enchanting far than the music of the spheres, comes the cheering announcement: “I am the

resurrection and the life. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Jesus of Nazareth has grappled with the last enemy; He has entered his gloomy caverns; He has burst asunder his cold and icy fetters, and poured a flood of immortal radiance upon that dark prison house, where nought but despair had ever been known. Lift up your heads, then, and rejoice, ye weeping and afflicted pilgrims; it is true your dear friend lies motionless and cold in death, but she has only "fallen asleep in Jesus, and if she sleep, she shall do well." The all-searching eye of God is not dim, that it cannot see, nor his arm shortened that it cannot save, and at the appointed time life will revisit her mouldering arm, and she will bloom again with unfading verdure and loveliness in the region of cloudless day. "Arise, then, and depart, for this is not your rest. Go your way, till the end be, for ye shall stand in your lot at the end of the days." Take your staff, and journey on toward the promised land—go forward in obedience to the divine mandate, watched over by a father's eye, and guided by a father's hand—compassed about with a great cloud of invisible spectators, cheering you onward in your Christian course; and when you come to the margin of that stream—"the narrow stream of death"—which separates between you and the celestial paradise, a convoy of angels shall be sent to bear you over the swellings of Jordan, and waft your ransomed spirits to that blissful clime—

"Where rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns."

SERMON DCXXV.

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ENOCH'S WALK WITH GOD.

"And Enoch walked with God."—GENESIS v. 24.

A single word of commendation from the mouth of God is amply sufficient to carry one's name and virtues down to the end of time. The biography of faithful Enoch is comprised in *three words*; while the exploits of Alexander—the career of Napoleon, and of many of earth's bloody heroes, require *many volumes* to record them.

This short sentence, comprising the whole life of this good man, is a luminous point in the world's history, which no achievements in statesmanship, or martial heroism can ever equal or obscure, and which no

length of time can ever blot out. And yet, I doubt not, we have many such examples of piety and humility in our own times. God saw fit, in the case of Enoch, to exempt him from the great curse resting upon all the posterity of Adam, in consequence of transgression—the curse of death. He was, therefore, translated, so that he should not suffer its pangs and struggles, nor go into its dark and gloomy chambers. An event so strange—so entirely out of the ordinary course of nature—must have originated in a cause as singular. Adam and Eve, the first guilty pair, had already paid their debt to Nature, and been gathered under the curse of a broken law, to their resting place in the earth. Fifty-seven years after this event, Enoch, without tasting of death, was changed from mortal to immortality, and thus introduced into the presence of God, and the paradise above.

In the translation of Enoch, the great work and victory of the promised Messiah was clearly seen. The world could read in this event, the glorious resurrection of all the dead, and the nature of that great mission the Son of God was to fulfil on earth. Being the seventh from Adam, Enoch was cotemporary with him more than three hundred years, and hence, through Adam, he had a perfect knowledge of the creation, and the fall—the glory preceding, and the misery succeeding, that terrible event. And he must have learned the nature of that promise made to Adam—that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

Even the heathen venerated *Enoch*. The Babylonians consider him as the founder of their astrology, and tell us that he is the same who is called Atlas by the Greeks, who, from his profound skill in natural objects, and particularly from his discoveries in astronomy, was hyperbolically said to sustain the heavens on his shoulders. Eusebius, the great ecclesiastical historian, who wrote in the fourth century, quotes Eupolampus—then an old heathen writer, of great credit and celebrity—who speaks of Enoch in relation to many of the idolatrous practices of the nations of the east. The Arabian writers call him Edris, and speak of the great extent of his knowledge. The translations of the Grecian heroes, or demigods, especially Hesperus and Astrea, who were said to have ascended to heaven alive, and to have been turned into stars and celestial signs—the Dhruva among the Hindoos; the Buddha, among the Ceylonese; and the Xaca, among the Calmuchs of Siberia, all may be traced up to the translation of this good man, of whom it is faithfully recorded that “he walked with God.” How extensive must his influence have been, and how pre-eminent his virtues, to have been held in such universal estimation in an age like that in which he lived.

The very name of Enoch shows the piety of Jared his father. His name signifies to instruct, imitate, dedicate, and probably his father partook of the spirit of his father again; for Mahalaleel seems to have been devoted in his piety, and close in his walk with God. But the godly character so much commended in our text, Enoch, under the Divine blessing, formed himself. He walked with God; this was a voluntary act; he chose the company and the companionship of God above that of all men. The Hebrew word signifies to set himself to walk with God, and then he did walk with God. It has, therefore, two independent meanings—the one is a fixedness of purpose; the other is a reflex influence of this purpose upon him who conceives it. The purpose of Enoch was to lead a

holy life, and then by divine grace the influence of this purpose upon his soul, was to sustain it, and to bring it into companionship and communion with God.

He, doubtless, had the good counsel of Seth, Enos, Cainan and others, who very much contributed to his spiritual strength and resolution. How powerful is parental example. If all parents would imitate Jared, and follow his example in early dedicating their children to the Lord, how universally they would find, that "just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined;" and that when a child is trained up in the way he should go, he will not depart from his early counsel and instruction when he becomes old.

Enoch was a *prophet*, and the first of all the prophets who prophesied of a judgment to come. This remarkable revelation seems to have been made to him, in consequence of his eminent piety. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and that hope in His mercy." The language in which he declares an approaching judgment, is majestic and sublime, scarcely equaled by any of the later prophets, or even the apostles.

In tracing Enoch's walk with God, we shall learn what our own ought to be. Let us inquire WHAT THE FIGURATIVE EXPRESSION OF OUR TEXT MEANS—WALKING WITH GOD."

I. The expression walking together always denotes *strong personal friendship and agreement*.

The question is asked by one of old: "Can two walk together, except they are agreed?" By nature men are said to walk away from God, having no desire to be found with him, or to possess a knowledge of His ways. They have lost his favor, and they feel a consciousness that they are unlike Him—hating what He loves, and loving what He hates—and, therefore, cannot be happy in his presence. The Apostle Paul says: "Therefore, as by one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Condemnation, resulting from known and acknowledged guilt, destroys all self confidence. This the sinner feels, and he fears to come into the presence of his Maker, but withdraws into deeper darkness lest his deeds should be reproved. He can, therefore, never walk with God, and lift up his face and cry, "Abba, Father," unless he is redeemed by the blood of Christ, and so reconciled unto God.

The whole human family by nature, are disinherited—alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, "Children of wrath," having no hope, and without God in the world. To this universal apostasy there is not one single exception. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand that did seek after God. "They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one." This moral condition is ours, and involves deep, settled hostility to the character, the purposes, and the moral government of God. "The carnal mind is enmity *itself* against God, and is not subject to His law, neither can it be," till it is subdued and renovated by grace. "From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in us." Now, to walk with a God of such immaculate purity as He who declares the heavens impure in His sight, and who charges His angels with folly,

before whom the illuminate Seraphim veil their faces ; to walk with such a God, requires righteousness in character, purity in life, holiness in heart, and harmony in views, and union in feeling, of no ordinary extent or degree. Until this moral change in man is produced, he can hold no communion with his Maker, nor his Maker with him. But who, as God smiles upon him, would not exclaim, and especially, as God calls him into His presence, and invites him to hold communion with Him—"Who is a God like unto *Thee*, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy;" "for He will subdue our iniquities, and cast all our sins into the depth of the sea." Thus he removes by His mercy our guilt and moral pollution, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; and none, till they are thus cleansed and washed and purified, can walk with Him.

II. Walking with God implies *active faith* in Him.

"By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God translated him; for *before* his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God." "But without faith," we are told by the apostle, "it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to Him must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of all those who diligently seek Him." His creating goodness demands it. He has made us *intelligent, thinking, choosing, reasoning beings*. With all the goodness he has caused to pass before us, and the attributes of His nature emblazoned on the heavens, and every where written on the earth, were we to overlook Him, or fail to recognize His lofty and sublime perfections in their resplendant manifestation in the material universe, we should richly deserve His indignation and wrath, and our unbelief against such a flood of testimony would be the very incarnation of guilt and wickedness. His preserving mercy demands the exercise of unlimited faith in Him. He has sustained us for the very purpose of our confidence and honorable trust in Him. What a bright example Enoch has set us! Our faith, like his, should be unwavering; it should be as living and as operative, and as glorious in its results.

III. Walking with God implies a *conformity to His character, an obedience to His will, and a delight in His way*.

God has but one way, uniform, unchanging, and eternal, in which He moves, and this way He has revealed to us in His word. Every soul, therefore, found in this way, is found in company with God. It is a high way, a holy way, a safe way—it is cast up in this waste wilderness by the wisdom and the love of God, for all His redeemed to pass over to the promised land. It is the way of prayer, of holiness, of justice, of mercy, of humility, and of love; and yet, "these are but parts of His way, and how small a portion of Him is known."

Christian, are you in this way, and now walking with God like Enoch? Then are you a just man—a holy man, an humble man, a righteous man, a benevolent man, a praying man, for these are God's way. He is only found in them. If these strong moral principles do not characterize your life and actions, you cannot "walk with God," nor enjoy the light of His countenance, nor the communion of His spirit, nor the fellowship of His Son. But, "blessed is that people that know the joyful sound, and that walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, for in thy name shall

they rejoice, and in thy name shall they be exalted." He shall direct the paths of all those who acknowledge Him, and make even the munition of rocks their defence, and cause their bread to be abundant, and their water to be sure.

My dear, impenitent hearers, have you ever walked with God? Do you not even now fear him exceedingly? O, if you were wise, you would not permit this unmeasured alienation to exist between God and your own souls. You would seek a reconciliation before the judgment of the great day shall irrevocably fix your eternal destiny. Will you not do it? The piety of Enoch most likely commenced early in life—where and when the piety of every one should begin. And were all parents as faithful as Jared with Enoch, piety would be vastly more common in families than it now is. What sight on earth can equal the fervent manifestation of piety in the youthful heart? "A flower that's offered in the bud is no vain sacrifice." "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." My young friends, you never will find a better or more convenient time to make your peace with God, than now. You can ask for no more aids, or means, or opportunities, than God grants you now. Earlier habits are more easily formed, and when formed, are the most permanent and abiding. "It is good," says Jeremiah, "it is good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth."

Enoch was a man of great piety more than 300 years. How clearly are we taught that the pleasures of religion never *clay*, but grow with their growth, and increase with their increase! Said David—"Thy loving kindness is better than life, therefore my lips shall praise Thee. Thus while I live I will bless Thee. I will lift up my hands in Thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips."

Enoch sustained this religious character as a father, and the head of a numerous family. Piety is a promoter of every social virtue—a sanctifier of every domestic relation—a strengthener of every pure affection. There is no relation in life more favorable to piety than that of a husband and a father—neither is there any relation where piety is so much needed. Children copy the example of their parents so thoroughly, that parents are said to live in their children. If there is a family on earth that excites my sympathies, and for whom I feel an intense interest, it is that family in the midst of whom there stands no family altar, and where the voice of thanksgiving and of praise is never heard—where no confessions are made for sin—no mercies asked—no pardon sought—no grace invoked. Better ten thousand times dwell in a roofless house, amid descending storms, with God's presence and protection, than in houses of cedar, on which the frown of heaven rests. How sublime was the purpose of Joshua, for himself and his house to serve the Lord, compared with that carnal and worldly ambition of Bonaparte, to make his family kings and nobles. Better, said an old heathen, to raise the souls of our children, than the roofs of our houses. How patriarchal and priestly, how dignified and noble it looks to see a father gather around him his family, while he calmly, and with seeming confidence and trust, opens God's holy volume, and reads the words of wisdom and spiritual knowledge, while every eye in that little admiring group is turned on him, while the entrance of what

he reads gives them understanding—then he kneels down in their midst, and offers for them all that petition which each seems to think and feel his own. They rise, and commence their various duties for the day with consciences calm and tranquil, and with an indefinable sensation of security and peace, as though God was their friend, and He would protect them—their father's friend, and He would save them. Thus felt Enoch, as he walked with God—and thus will feel every saint who imitates Enoch. O may each of you be found—not like *Peter*, following afar off, but like Enoch, “walking with God.”

But Enoch was carried bodily into heaven, that glorious, happy, holy place, into which all weary pilgrims will ultimately be received when they have served their generation according to the will of God, and have fallen asleep. And into the same divine and heavenly abode, just twenty-one hundred years afterwards, Elijah was borne in a chariot of fire, and on the whirlwind's wing; and nine hundred years after this again, in majestic sublimity, ascended the Captain of our salvation to the throne of universal dominion in the same lofty heavens, from the field of conflict and of death. Thus, before the law was given, Enoch was taken up to heaven, to show all who lived before the revelation of God was made, the certainty of the resurrection, and of immortality upon it. Then Elijah was taken up to heaven under the law—to represent the resurrection under that legal economy. And then Jesus Christ followed under the Gospel economy to represent that. So that each great period of the world had its representation of a final resurrection, and of a glorious immortality. Multitudes had witnessed the piety of Enoch, and then saw him depart from the world he had honored, not to the tomb, but to the bosom of God. Multitudes more had witnessed the piety of Elijah, and then, when his pilgrimage was ended, they saw the heavens opened to receive him amid its rushing hosts, and fiery chariots.

And then, again, multitudes more had witnessed the wonderful works of Jesus Christ, and after his Crucifixion, had seen him at the head of principalities and powers, ascend in triumph and in glory, as the first fruits of the resurrection of all the dead. The redemption of the body, therefore, must have been a matter of faith to all the godly, in every age of the world.

But now, dear impenitent hearer, you also will be raised from the dead—and where will you appear? You will surely stand in the judgment—but on which side of the Judge? Your eyes will behold Him as he descends from heaven—but will it be with joy or with grief? There you will see Enoch of whom I have now spoken—there Elijah that followed him on fire and flame—and there you will see Jesus who was marshalled amid unutterable sublimity and grandeur overpowering to that same immortal state;—and there, God grant, for Jesus' sake, you may meet them all “robed in righteousness,” and radiant in beauty—fully prepared to participate in the joys which are at God's right hand, and in the pleasures which are there forevermore.